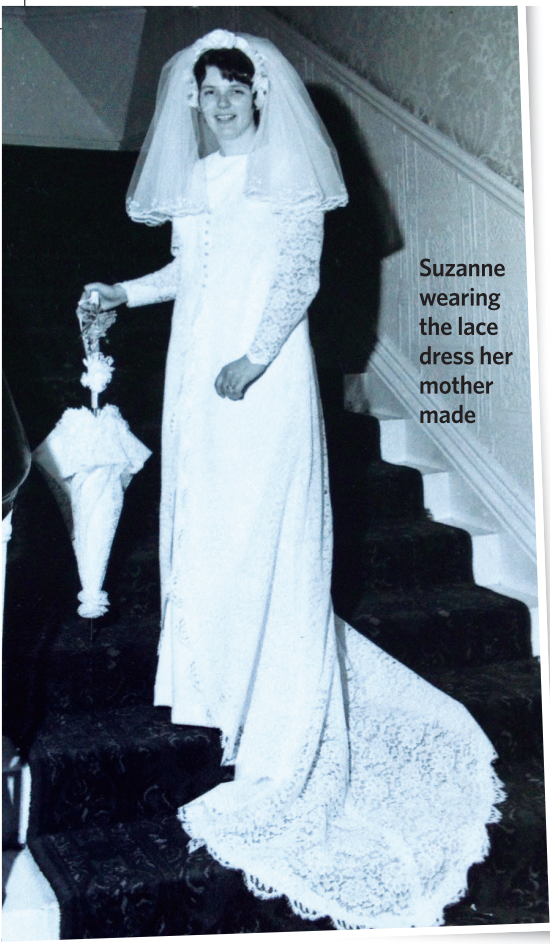




Suzanne wearing the lace dress her mother made

Dressmaking runs in the blood for Suzanne Beardsley's family. When her daughter, Sarah, was married in 2003, Suzanne made the bridesmaids' dresses – just as her own mum, Mary, had sewn Suzanne's bridesmaids' and wedding dress in 1970.

'We'd travelled down from Chester to London to choose the fabric – a beautiful Nottingham lace. It was a smashing thing for us to do together,' says Suzanne. 'My dress looked so different from anything you could get in the shops.'

Above: The bridesmaids' dresses Suzanne made for Sarah's wedding in 2003. Right: Suzanne's big day in 1970



'Years later, when my nephew was getting married, I found material left over from the bridesmaids' dresses and made a dress for my youngest daughter, Sarah, who was then two.'

'When Sarah got married herself, I made her bridesmaids' dresses. Both my daughters are into sewing so I'm hoping it may become a tradition. Sarah has two girls, so you never know!'



History Repeated

Kate Blackadder was married in 1986 wearing a very special wedding dress – her mother Muriel's from 1953.

'Just after I got engaged, Mum brought out her dress to show me,' says Kate. 'She didn't ask me to wear it – although maybe she was dropping a hint! But when I tried it on, it fitted perfectly. And I loved the thought of the continuity. It made my day even more special.'

Four of Muriel's bridesmaids



Kate in her mum's wedding dress in 1986



Muriel wearing the gown in 1953

attended Kate's wedding – 'so it was lovely for them to see the dress all over again and have that link back to when they were little girls.'

And there's a chance the dress may become a family tradition. 'My 22-year-old daughter tried the dress on recently – but that may be as far as her interest will go!'

Woman's Weekly Weddings Special



Michele and Luigi had the wedding they wanted – all thanks to their daughter

It Works Both Ways!

I'm really lucky to have been able to go to my parents' wedding,' says Alice Fonda-Marsland who, at 24, organised her mum's wedding when her parents, Michele and Luigi, decided finally to marry after 40 years together.

'Having me there helped my mum to feel calm,' says Alice. 'Plus, it was great to have her wedding planned by someone who knows her so well!'

'I threw myself into staging a gorgeous garden wedding: hunting down Mum's dream blue wedding dress and baking treats for an afternoon tea reception. I was even

flower arranging at midnight before the big day. Not to mention fielding dozens of calls from my stressed mum threatening to call the whole thing off!'

'I also made Mum's bridal jewellery using pearls and a silver pendant left to her by her my nana, who sadly died two

years before the wedding. I knew Mum was worried about getting married without Nana there, so I thought it would help to have something of Nana's with her for the day.'

'We're not the most vocal family, so the best way to show my love and appreciation was through my actions,' Alice recalls. 'It felt like a celebration of our family and my parents' relationship. In my wedding speech I told them that I look at them and see what I want in a relationship: companionship and a love so understated they'd never normally make a fuss of it.'



Alice staged her parents' wedding to show her 'love and appreciation'

Thanks Mum!

Your daughter's wedding is emotional for any mother. But mums often do a lot more than watch from the sidelines

Wedding Wonder!



Marjorie is sew skilled

planning each other's dresses and not one cross word between any of us,' she says.

'My girls felt it was very special that we'd worked so well together to produce something so individually 'ours', she says. 'They really appreciated the time I spent adjusting patterns, holding fittings for each bridesmaid, and the hours spent at the sewing machine, sometimes working late into the night.'

And a special mention goes to Marjorie's husband. 'He's a valuable part of the team, keeping me supplied with cups of tea and cooking meals so I could keep going. He's always been a proud 'Father of the Bride' – and bridesmaids!'

Marjorie Gale is a true wedding wonder, making the bridesmaids' dresses for each of her three daughters' weddings – in 1984, 1991 and 1992.

'It was a real family effort, with all the girls involved in



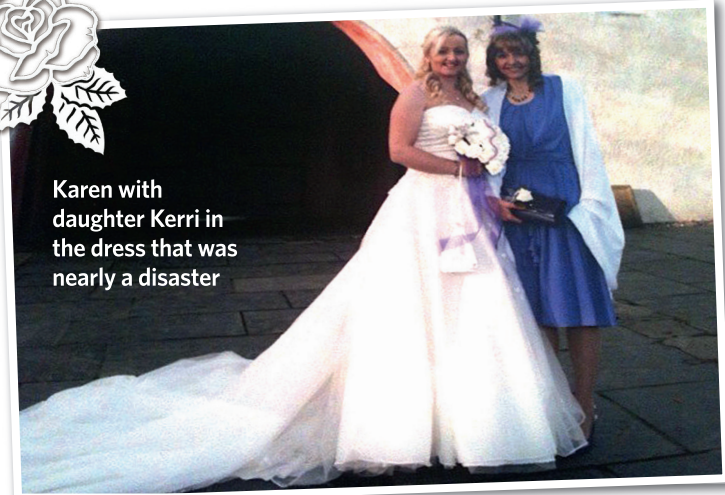
Marjorie made pale blue satin dresses for her daughter's 1992 wedding



She created pink lace numbers in 1991



In 1984, Marjorie sewed blue full-length frocks for the bridesmaids



Karen with daughter Kerri in the dress that was nearly a disaster

Last-Minute Rescue

Kerri thought she'd found the perfect dress – until she got it home from the dressmaker the night before the wedding only to find that the train was creased and the pearl embellishments hanging by their threads.

'Kerri was in tears,' her mum, Karen Inglis, recalls. 'She kept saying, 'I'm not getting married – not in that dress'. So I got out my

needle and thread and set about re-sewing each of the hundreds of pearls, then gently ironed the dress inch by inch. The train was so long and I could only do a wee bit at a time – it took forever!'

'We finally finished at two in the morning, and Kerri went to bed with a smile on her face – which made it all worth it; she was a gorgeous bride.'